



## The Boy Who Grew Up in a Minute

By Frederick E. Burnham

**H**IS name was Aaron Mansfield. He was the largest, although not the oldest, boy in District Number Two school at South Windham, where I taught in the early Nineties. I think that he was the most wonderful judge of distance of any boy or man I ever met. There was not a boy in the school who would play marbles with him unless he was heavily handicapped. Unlucky the rabbit or squirrel which ventured forth within range of a stone hurled by Aaron's right arm. He was almost sure to fell the unfortunate animal. When it came to making a cast for a trout his aim seemed to be all but absolutely perfect.

As a student Aaron was an out and out failure. The trouble was that his mind was rarely centered upon his books. Apparently about the only things which interested him were the woods and fields and streams, or, perchance, some game or some practical joke. Speaking of the latter, as a practical joker he was incorrigible—up to one memorable day, the day that he grew up in a minute.

Half a mile from the schoolhouse was a quarry which had been worked for a number of years. It was in the vicinity of two hundred yards in width at the widest part, and about a hundred feet deep. Half a dozen men were employed at the quarry, and among others was a rather irascible workman of the name of McDermott. Peter was his first name. Peter had a boy who occasionally accompanied him to the quarry, there to spend the day playing about pools of water where the quarried stone had formed basins. Andy McDermott was a little chap, scarcely five years of age when Aaron grew from boyhood to manhood in a minute.

Of a Saturday morning early in October drilling was under way for a blast. Peter McDermott was holding the drill and two other workmen were swinging the sledgehammers. Aaron Mansfield, chancing that way, thought he saw an excellent opportunity to perpetrate a practical joke upon unsuspecting Peter, and straightway he returned to his home that he might carry that same practical joke out without delay.

It was an hour or more before Aaron returned to the brink of the quarry, owing to the fact that upon reaching home he had to do an errand for his mother. Much to Aaron's chagrin, he found upon reaching the quarry that the drilling had been completed, the charge of giant powder inserted and the fuse lighted. The workmen had scrambled from the pit and were then awaiting the blast. "Just my luck," growled Aaron under his breath. "If it hadn't been for—"

At that instant Peter's boy came into sight from behind a pile of granite. Then he was less than six feet from where the fuse was sputtering. With a hoarse cry of anguish Peter started down the incline, unmindful of the fact that the fuse had less than an inch left to burn.

"You can't save him, Peter!" cried Job Randall, the owner of the quarry. Then he got a grip upon the frantic father and attempted to drag him back. The while did the boy advance toward the sputtering fuse. When within a foot of it the little fellow looked up and laughed. Peter was fighting like a maniac to break away from Randall, and undoubtedly he would have succeeded had not another workman run to Randall's assistance. Meanwhile the fuse was burning, burning, burning.

"Papa, see fire-c'acker!" cried Andy clapping his hands gleefully.

At that instant a bulging paper bag came sailing through the air from the other side of the quarry. It came straight out from the brink of the quarry, and making a graceful curve, dropped straight toward the tiny remnant of that burning

fuse. A fraction of a second later and it struck fair and square above the charge of giant powder, and, bursting, a quart or more of water bespattered the spot.

Speechless, those who had witnessed the seeming miracle, stood staring down into the pit. It was not until they saw Aaron making his way down that they came to their senses and cheered. Before Aaron had reached the bottom Peter McDermott was on his way; slipping, sliding, jumping, he shot down the incline, and a moment later he had picked his boy up in his arms and started back whence he had come, oblivious to what had actually transpired. He had gone less than twenty feet when his frantic ascent was checked by those who had followed him.

"What's your hurry, Peter?" laughed one of the men. "Young Aaron Mansfield put out the fuse."

"Huh!"

Then Peter dropped in a dead faint.

"What I want to know is how you came to do it, Aaron?" questioned the owner of the quarry a few minutes later when Peter had come to his senses. "How did you happen to have that bag of water handy at just the right time?"

"Well, I will tell you," chuckled Aaron. "About an hour ago I happened by the quarry, and seeing Peter McDermott holding the drill, I thought I would play a practical joke on him."

"Burst that bag of water on his head, eh?" laughed Mr. Randall.

"Yes, that is what I had in mind," confessed Aaron. "I know that I ought not to have planned any such joke, but anyhow I did. I—I guess I'm done with practical jokes. Since seeing little Andy down there things have begun to look different to me. Life seems lots more serious to me than it did."

"So you planned to souse me, Aaron," said Peter, gripping Aaron's hand. "It sure would have been some joke on me, but it wouldn't have been any joke on you had I caught you. I am glad now that you had it all planned out. You're a wonderful shot, my boy. You have got an eye like an eagle."

There was scarcely a man, woman or child in the entire township who long before night had not heard the story of Aaron's remarkable exploit, and a less level-headed boy's head would very likely have been turned by the high praise which was his portion. Much to the surprise of all, however, Aaron suddenly



changed from a happy-go-lucky, care-free youth to a very serious-minded young man. Within a month he succeeded in climbing from the very foot of his class to within two of the head. Another month saw him leading his class.

It was about a year later that Aaron had the great misfortune to lose his father. Aaron had been planning for a course at an academy, but the death of Mr. Mansfield upset his plans along that line. It was then that Peter McDermott stepped into the breach. "You are going to the academy, my boy," declared Peter, placing his hand upon Aaron's shoulder. "I have not forgotten the day that you saved my boy's life, even if you was planning a mean joke on me. You have nothing to worry about so far as your bills at the academy are concerned."

Thus it was that Aaron found the way open for a better education than the district school could offer him, and he it said that he made the most of the opportunity. Having graduated from the academy, he entered college, and it was Peter McDermott, then owner of a quarry himself, who footed the bills. The time came that he graduated from a medical school with high honors. Recently I learned that the practice of surgery has brought Dr. Aaron Mansfield a very large measure of success.

### The Redhead

BY CORA M. V. PREBLE

IN our block, two little girls Have just the nicest golden curls; But they are naughty as can be For this is what they said to me: "My hair is pretty—yours is red!" I told my daddy what they said, But he just smiled and hugged me tight And said, "Your hair suits me all right." One day they called me "Redhead Sue," Then "Carrot-top" and "Ginger" too, And I got angry as could be When they said such mean things to me; But since I told dad what they said I'm kind of glad my hair is red 'Cause he said, "Dearie, don't you mind, For red hair is the prettiest kind." My daddy likes girls with red hair, So call me names—I do not care; He says some day when I've grown big That I'll be proud of "Titian wig," And that my mama has been told Her red hair is prettier than gold— And if 'twere black, or brown, or tow 'Twould not be any nicer, so!

### The Fish That Worked

BY BLANCHE ELIZABETH WADE

LITTLE MARIE HILL did not like to work—not if the thing she was doing was called work, and so she nearly always pretended the work was a game, and then she did it twice as fast, and it seemed almost fun. But when a time came when she did not like to play either, either at the work turned into a game or at real fun out-of-doors, or at real fun in the house, her father

and mother knew something was the matter.

"Yes, indeed!" said good Dr. Potter when he was called to see Marie. "A little girl who neither works nor plays needs my best prescription."

"Does your best prescription taste horrid and bitter?" asked Marie.

"My best prescription does not taste at all," said he.

Marie looked at him in surprise.

"No, sir! Not at all! Not by any manner of means!" said the funny doctor. "My best prescription says father and mother must pack their trunks and yours and take you to a fine place I tell them about. You have to take an ocean trip to get there and that is part of the medicine, and after you get there, you breathe in the kind of air they have there; you eat the kind of things they grow there; you see all the funny things they have there, and by that time, you will have rosy cheeks, and back you come to work like a beaver, and play like a tomboy!"

After that, there was nothing to do but follow that best prescription, and it ended in the three of them landing one day in one of the most beautiful spots in the West Indies. My! How the water sparkled! How the sun shone! How hungry already was Marie for the lovely fruits she saw!

One day after Marie had been in this beautiful spot a number of weeks, she went with mother into one of the houses of an old West Indian who had brought them fruit from time to time, and outside, Marie spied something hanging in the sun.

"What is that?" she asked.

"That is the old wife," said the man who spoke English as well as Marie could speak it.

"The—the what?" stammered Marie, her eyes growing big with fright. "I—I must have not understood you. It—it looked like a fish, you see."

Suddenly he knew why she was scared, and had to laugh.

"It is indeed a fish, little lady," said he, "but we call it the old wife here, and maybe you will see why."

Then he told her all about it. You see it was an uncommon fish in a way. It was flat like a sole, or like a flounder, and its covering was so rough that it was almost like sandpaper. The people used the fish for scouring their floors. First the fish was dried in the sun as his was drying, until it was hard and without a bit of moisture left. Then as we use the scrubbing-brush, the West Indians use the rough, dry fish with water and common soap.

The West Indian pointed proudly to his spotless white floor scrubbed that very morning with this odd scrubbing-brush. Not only was the floor white, but it was also as smooth as though planed by carpenters.

Marie knew right away why he called the fish an old wife. There some of the

women worked much harder than the men, and because many of even the oldest wives still kept at work, the old wife seemed a fitting name for the fish that worked too.

The West Indian gave Marie an "old wife" to take home with her, and you may like to know that by the time Marie had taken the ocean trip back, she was ready not only for play again but even liked to work hard—almost as hard, she said, as the fish that worked too.

### Service Versus Reputation

BY H. O. SPELMAN

HEROLD and Uncle Ramond were spending vacation at beautiful Colorado Springs. They had climbed the hundreds of steps at Seven Falls to the lofty top of Old Cheyenne Mountain to see famous Helen Hunt Jackson's grave, on the projecting crag where she did much of her writing.

"What a delightful place to write," exclaimed Uncle Ramond. "No wonder her book 'Romona' is full of uplifting thoughts."

"Yes," replied Herold, "and see how many have written here," and he pointed to the green bushes about the large pile of rough stones over her grave. "See the thousand visiting cards hung on the thorn bushes. Whoever coined that saying: 'Fools' names and monkeys' faces are always seen in public places' knew what he was talking about."

"It's a natural desire of the heart misdirected," commented Uncle Ramond. "Everyone should want to influence others. That's what we're made for—to make ourselves felt. There's something seriously wrong with the boy who doesn't want to be a power in the world. The trouble is so many of us go at it the wrong way."

"When I visited Washington's old home at Mount Vernon, I found in the small room on the third floor hundreds of names written on the gray walls, but not a single one I knew. Names worth knowing are not written in fading ink, but in character-building deeds. The owners of these printed cards were attracted to Helen Hunt Jackson's grave by her noble deeds. She loved and helped the poor Indians. She wrote inspiring books."

"Herold, I'm glad you're not worrying about your name being known. A hundred and fifty years ago, a talented Englishman who signed himself 'Junius' published many letters in the press favoring truer liberty. He had a determining influence in his times, but he never divulged his true name. A multitude of great hymns and poems, and some epoch-making books have appeared from unknown authors. These men sought to serve, but cared little for reputation. It's a great thing to sit upon the throne, but it's a far greater thing to be the wise man, the mighty power behind the throne."



## Jack and Mary Visit a Mansion

BY WINIFRED ARNOLD

SUPPER was just over in the Sheffield house, and in the library Jack and Mary had settled down on the couch, one on each side of Uncle Jim, for their usual evening's chat,—an airplane trip they called it.

"It is my turn to choose tonight," said Mary happily, "And I want to take a trip to New York City."

"Agreed," assented Uncle Jim with his best bow. "And where in the city is it your ladyship's pleasure that we alight?"

Mary thought for a moment. "O-oh, somewhere near where we went to that Christmas celebration in the church," she decided at last.

"Away up town, then," smiled Uncle Jim. "Let me see then, Pilot Jack. Suppose we stop off at the Jumel Mansion. Or would you perhaps prefer the Roger Morris House, or Washington's Headquarters?"

"Washington's Headquarters," said Mary promptly.

"I'd like the Roger Morris House," answered Jack, "because I know Roger Morris Dayton, and I'd like to tell him I went to his ancestor's house."

Uncle Jim smiled again—as he usually did when he was with Jack and Mary. "I still choose the Jumel mansion," he said, "but there, what's in a name? Let's drop down on that beautiful old colonial mansion down there, pilot. Yes, that one on 160th Street, with the pillars in front, and that charming little park all around it. And when we get there we can each call it what we choose. Jack can start, because it was built in 1765 by Lieut.-Colonel Roger Morris for a country house for his lovely young bride, who was the famous Mary Philipse."

"Country-house!" cried Mary, "Why Uncle Jim I thought you said it was in New York City."

"And so I did," said Uncle Jim. "But times have changed, my dear. You just wait a minute, and I'll read you a copy of a bill of sale for that house, which was made out in 1792. Yes, here it is:—

"For Sale:—That pleasant and much-admired seat, Harlem Heights \* \* \* distant ten miles from New York containing about 130 acres of best salt meadow"—

"Why it was a farm" cried Mary.

"Exactly. Shall I go on? 'The house \* \* \* commands an extended view of the Hudson, the East River, Harlem River, Hell Gate and the Sound many miles to the East. \* \* \* In front may be seen the city of New York, and the high hills of Staten Island more than twenty miles distant.'"

"How lovely!" said Mary, "Does it 'command' all those now, Uncle Jim?"

"It commands more tall apartment houses than anything else now," answered Uncle Jim, "but it still did in the days, eleven years later, when it was selected by General Washington for his headquarters. That was after the Battle



THE JUMEL MANSION

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of Long Island, you remember, and Washington rode from this house to direct the Battle of Harlem Heights. And another interesting thing was that Nathan Hale came to Washington in this house to receive his orders before he went out to die for his country.

"And Jack, you'd be particularly interested in the Council Chamber, I know. Not only because it was General Washington's, but because he was sitting in it at work when two Indian braves from the Six Nations came to see him, bringing laurel branches in token of their loyalty to him.

After a while, Washington had to leave Harlem Heights, and go over into New Jersey; and the British seized it and also used it as a headquarters. But Washington, you will be pleased to know, came back again to visit it. Years later, when he was president, he made up a party of his cabinet ministers and their wives and brought them out to his old headquarters for dinner. You can imagine what a flutter this visit made, for the house was owned by a simple farmer then, and his wife got the dinner."

"Was it still ten miles from New York?" asked Jack.

"Yes. It was that for a good long time. Didn't I tell you about the little milestone that I saw tucked away in a yard a little nearer downtown, which said: '9 miles from New York'? It looked quite fresh too."

"And when did it get to be the other thing you spoke of—the some sort of Mansion?"

"The Jumel Mansion? That was in 1810 when a Frenchman named Stephen Jumel bought it. His wife was an American girl named Eliza Bowen, Mary. And they both admired Washington so much that they took pains to find out just

how the house looked when the General was there, and to restore it to its former splendor.

Mme. Jumel used to give wonderful balls in the room with eight sides which Washington used as a Council Chamber, and somebody said that she had a row of 17 mirrors a foot high put around the base board to reflect the trains as the ladies whirled about. It would be funny if it were there now, wouldn't it?

And another interesting thing, Mary Jane, is that she used to go out driving on the road to Bloomingdale in an old Colonial yellow coach with postillions in livery."

"My! it must have been fun to live then!" sighed Mary who always adored the pictures of Colonial belles with their powdered hair and patches. What else about her?"

"That after M. Jumel died, she was married again—to Aaron Burr—in the tea-room in that very house. And that she lived to be a very old lady, and then left the house to a niece."

"Does she live there now?"

"Nobody lives there now. It is a wonderful museum now, owned by the city of New York, and anybody can go and look about and see the historical relics, and the beautiful pieces of china and all that. But the most wonderful thing to me was to be able to look around at those rooms and know that Washington and Hamilton, and Nathan Hale, and all those other famous people had walked through those halls, and sat in those rooms and eaten and slept there for months at a time. It was better than any lesson in history to me."

"I'd love to learn my history that way too" laughed Mary, "Come on Jack, let's go to New York the very next time Uncle Jim goes."





## THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.



Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of The Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

3 EDGEHILL ROAD,  
WINCHESTER, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck: I am eight years old and I go to the Unitarian Sunday School. My teacher's name is Miss Kerrison. I read *The Beacon* every Sunday. We have until Christmas to earn a dollar for a memorial window to Miss Symmes to be placed in our Sunday-school room. I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club.

Very sincerely yours,  
GRETCHEN STONE.

6 FENWICK ROAD,  
WINCHESTER, MASS.

My dear Miss Buck: I go to the Unitarian Church School. I am nine years old. I read the letters in *The Beacon* to the class. I have earned a dollar for the memorial window by setting the table, washing the dishes, sweeping the floor and sweeping the snow off the steps.

Yours truly,  
CONSTANCE PURINGTON.

Other members of this class of girls who have recently joined our Club are Octavia Cooper, Camille Covines, Betty Mead, Helen Thompson and Ruth Wadleigh.

MECHANIC ST.,  
BARRE, MASS.

My dear Miss Buck: I have been enjoying *The Beacon* ever since I have started to take it. My Sunday-school teacher is Mrs. Rice. The minister is Rev. Frederic Smith. My mother also teaches Sunday school.

Our church has a Junior Choir. The girls and boys in this choir sing occasionally in the church service.

I would like very much to join the Club.

Yours sincerely,  
GRACE WOLCOTT BOYD.

5 DEVENS STREET,  
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS.

Dear Miss Buck: I am a member of the Unitarian Sunday School. I am nine years old and am in the fifth grade of the Peter Bulkeley School. My Sunday school teacher's name is Miss Wheeler and my minister's name is Mr. Macdonald. I like them both very much. I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and like it very much. I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club.

Yours truly,  
CAROLYN E. HOSMER.

Other new members of our Club are—Carroll Borland, Alameda, Cal.; Frank L. Nagle, 3rd, Santa Barbara, Cal.; Darwina Beardsley, Ft. Collins, Col.; Ida Mary Japhet, Geneseo, Ill.; Mary Payson, Cape Elizabeth, Me.; Maxwell Eveleth, Kennebunk, Me.; Carola C. Cameron and Edgar Keene Meader, 3rd, Portland, Me.; Bernice Aylsworth, Lincoln, Neb.; Loyl Lyons, Primrose, Neb.; Frank O. Beverstock, and Guy Pierce, Peterborough, N. H.; Daniel Melcher, Montclair, N. J.; Flora Varon, Tompkinsville, S. I.; Robert Kern, Portland, Ore.; Donald Walker Donovan, Erie, Pa.; Barbara E. Bennett, Montpelier, Vt.; Janet Amelia Benkert, Monroe, Wis.

### Church School News

In Omaha, Neb., where Rev. Ralph E. Bailey has recently become minister of the church, a four-page program announcing the Junior Church has been mailed to members of the parish. This is the name that will now be given to the church school. There is excellent musical leadership and the religious instruction is carefully graded, Beacon Course materials being used for the classes. The service of worship of the Junior Church will be held in connection with the church service. A brief service of worship especially adapted to children will be held at the close of the study period at 10.45, after which at 11 o'clock the Junior Church chimes ring and the children assemble in the front pews in the church auditorium. At the close of the service of worship with the church, the members will be given recreational work in the church school room during the remainder of the church service. A postcard which accompanied this circular asked for the names of all the members of the household and for suggestions of families with children not attending church school elsewhere who might be interested in the Junior Church.

The school of the First Unitarian Church in Pittsburgh, Pa., uses the Beacon Course of study in its graded classes. The church calendar for November 26th carries a fine statement named "Youth and Our Church" which shows the opinion of the leaders of that organization as to the duty of the church to its children and young people. The Superintendent, W. W. Austin, urges the parents to take

home the outline of the Beacon Course which is placed in the rack in the vestibule and become acquainted with the work which the school in its five departments is doing.

The candle-light service as part of the Christmas festival was held in the Westminster Unitarian Church in Providence, R. I., Lancaster, Pa., Wollaston and Christ Church, Dorchester, Mass., and Baltimore, Md.

At Unity Church, St. Paul, Minn., the Christmas Party was held December 29th, which included games, supper, Christmas tree, and a play by the Christmas Mummies entitled "St. George and the Dragon."

At Wollaston, Mass., a pageant written by a member of the parish, entitled "The Spirit of Jesus Goes On," was given on Christmas Eve. Fifty men and boys and twenty women and girls participated.

Harvard Street Unitarian Church held its Christmas dramatic service on Sunday afternoon, December 17th, when an adaptation of Tolstoy's "Where Love Is God Is," was given by the church school with the assistance of Miss Alice Chase. The presentation was combined with carol singing and organ music.

When any church will inscribe over its altar, as its sole qualification for membership, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself," that church will I join with all my heart and with all my soul.—Abraham Lincoln.

## RECREATION CORNER.

### ENIGMA XXXVIII

I am composed of thirty-two letters and am a verse in Psalms.

My 31, 3, 29 is not old.

My 10, 5, 28, 13, 17, 18, is something everyone has.

My 15, 24, 30, 32, 14 is something used at dinner time.

My 6, 20, 1, is a dye.

My 26, 27, 18, 28, 16, is a direction.

My 21, 23, 7, is not glad.

My 29, 3, 4, 25, is a place where water is found.

My 2, 8, 12, 1, 5, 18, 11, is a record of past events.

My 22, 8, 19, 14, 9, are the skins of animals.

BOYLAND.

### ENIGMA XXXIX.

I am composed of 12 letters.

My 4, 3, 5, 6, we had for Christmas dinner.

My 7, 8, 9, 12, is to prod.

My 11, 10, 1, 12, is what everyone has.

My 6, 2, is an adverb.

My whole is a mountain in the West.

JEAN CAIRNS.

### HIDDEN BIRDS

1. His matches and pipe remained on the shelf.
2. Eric ran every race.
3. Every door had a similar knocker.
4. The flea gleefully hopped.
5. Birds nip eagerly at the green leaves.
6. In playing "allegro" use your fingers quickly.
7. Like Washington, with your new ax win great fame.
8. Suddenly, on Jack dawned the truth.
9. It is mean to use a gullible fellow so.
10. The fire was flaming out of the chimney.

E. A. C.

### LITERATURE EXAMINATION

What author is:

1. The head of a church.
2. An English shrub.
3. A domestic animal and the noise of another.
4. Not high and part of house.
5. A dark mineral and a low line of hills.
6. A very tall man.
7. A river in Italy.

The Portal.

### A QUEER CALCULATION

Take a season of the year, subtract the last half of it and have left what we all long to do. Add an effort and get chilly. Slice off the front half and add the opposite of in and get a chance to make good.

Firelight.

### ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 19

ENIGMA XXXV.—A good name is better than silver and gold.

ENIGMA XXXVI.—Henry W. Longfellow.

ZIGZAG PUZZLE.—

L A R K  
D I K E  
J U N E  
A L E C  
M O O N  
A L T O  
N O A H

A HOME NEED.—The letter "m"

## THE BEACON

REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR.

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